In every *ksien* and rougnly every two years in each *ju,* under the proper official, there were conducted the first of the examinations. Those who passed them were given the title of *hsiu ts'ai.* This had the effect of recognizing its possessor .as-qualified^ prepare further and to compete in the next stagei of the system. The *hsiu ts'ai* had certain privileges." Some of them received a subsidy from the government to enable them to continue their stiidiesfVthey were exempt from liability to corporal punishment by the^magistrates; they were considered members of the local gentry and could be invited to share in the discussion of local affiairs; and they were accorded other rights and immunities. Within the ranks of the *hsiu ts'ai* were subdivisions and titles of honor^In general the *hsiu ts'ai* constituted a privileged class to which accruedj£L_good .deal of social prestige. Now and then a minor officer was appointed directly from among their number, but they were not eligible to such posts as that of a *hsien* magistrate. yTo hold their titles, they had to continue their studies and to st^nd a reexaminatioa every three years.

The next major set of examinations led to the title of *chujen^* This was held in the provincial capitals, as a rule in tiffe early autumn, and at intervals of three years (actually, on the average, somewhat more frequently). In each of thesej:ities was a plot of ground on which hundreds of permanent ^talls were erected for this purpose. The tests were more formidable than those leading to thef *hsfu ts'ai^{fThey* were under the direction of a supervisor ati31Grassocfate appointed directly from Peking, and much ceremony attached to them. Every examination was divided into three sessions, each with its separate topics. The night before the

session the aspirants were led to their cells and sealed in them, and did not emerge until the third day. The mere physical strain was by no means slight, and it was not uncommon for a candidate to die under *it*| /The successful^Jn the ordeal were marked and honored men, ^specially those who passed at or near the head of the list :

Even the "degree" of *chii jen* did not usually entitle its recipient to hold office. As a rule a man was eligible only after having passed a third set of examinations, held at Peking. These also were usually at triennial intervals, and in the spring following the examinations leading to the *chii jen.* Only *chu jen* were ad-